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09/777,592	02/05/2001	Frederick W. Ryan JR.	F-235	3158

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EXAMINER

ERB, NATHAN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3628

DATE MAILED: 11/15/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/777,592

Applicant(s)

RYAN, FREDERICK W.

Examiner

Nathan Erb

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2-7,9-14 and 16-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2-7,9-14 and 16-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
2. Applicants' response to Office action was received on February 13, 2006.
3. Regarding applicant's arguments with respect to the rejections of claims 2, 9, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 102 from the previous Office action, applicant's arguments have been found to be persuasive. Therefore, all of those rejections have hereby been withdrawn. However, note the new rejection of these claims below in this Office action.
4. Regarding applicant's arguments with respect to the rejections of claims 3-7, 10-14, and 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. 103 from the previous Office action, applicant's arguments have been found to be persuasive. Therefore, all of those rejections have hereby been withdrawn. However, note the new rejections of these claims below in this Office action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
6. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 6 recites the limitation "the responsive action" in the third line of text of the claim. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

7. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

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Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

8. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. In order to be patentable, an invention involving a mathematical algorithm must produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result. State Street Bank & Trust Co. v. Signature Financial Group Inc., 47 USPQ2d 1596, 1600-1601 (Fed. Cir. 1998). The invention of this claim does not produce tangible results, for example, some sort of perceivable communication that transmits its determined result to a user. This could be a step producing a chart, printout, or computer monitor display; however, there is no such output in this claim. Therefore, this claim does not produce tangible results and is not patentable.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

9. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

10. Claims 16-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hunter, U.S. Patent No. 5,280,531.

As per **Claim 16**, Hunter discloses:

- a method of operating a data center for processing data associated with mail pieces and a plurality of postage metering systems for preparing mail pieces (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 3, line 49, through column 4, line 17; column 4, lines 26-42; data center would be wherever the data processing system is located; processes data associated with mail

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pieces, such as meter identification number; reference's invention can process information corresponding to a plurality of meters);

- obtaining reset data representative of reset activity associated with the plurality of postage metering systems (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 3, line 49, through column 4, line 17; column 4, lines 26-42; reset data here is in the refill file; reference's invention can process information corresponding to a plurality of meters);

- obtaining empirical data representative of mailing activity associated with the plurality of postage metering systems (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 3, line 49, through column 4, line 17; column 4, lines 26-42; empirical data here is in the expenditure file; reference's invention can process information corresponding to a plurality of meters);

- conducting a forensic accounting analysis of the empirical data and the reset data associated with a selected postage metering system using a previously defined time period over which to conduct the forensic accounting analysis (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 3, line 49, through column 4, line 17; column 4, lines 26-42; column 4, lines 53-68; column 5, lines 1-44; column 7, lines 1-7; forensic accounting analysis here is the comparison of postage purchased with postage used for the purpose of detecting potential mail fraud; empirical data here is in the expenditure file; reset data here is in the refill file; threshold may vary as a function of time; therefore, time period would need to be previously defined in order to determine threshold; analysis may be performed on a predetermined schedule).

As per **Claim 17**, Hunter further discloses initiating responsive action if the forensic accounting analysis reveals that the empirical data is not consistent with the reset data for the

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selected postage metering system (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 4, lines 26-42; column 5, lines 1-44).

As per **Claim 18**, Hunter further discloses wherein the responsive action includes conducting an inspection of the selected postage metering system (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 4, lines 26-42; column 5, lines 1-44).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

11. Claims 2-4 and 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hunter in view of Moore, U.S. Patent No. 5,917,925.

As per **Claim 2**, Hunter discloses:

- a mail piece verification system for processing mail pieces, the mail pieces having associated therewith respective mail piece data (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; system helps verify if mail pieces have valid indicia by detecting postal meter fraud; processes a stream of mail pieces; postage amount and meter identification number are mail piece data);
- the data center including a plurality of account files corresponding to a plurality of postage metering systems (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 3, line 49, through column 4, line 17; column 4, lines 26-42; data center would be wherever the data processing system is located; account files include expenditure file and refill file; data center can hold information corresponding to a plurality of meters);
- wherein the data center is for: storing reset data in each of the plurality of account files representative of reset activity associated with the plurality of postage metering systems,

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respectively (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 3, line 49, through column 4, line 17; column 4, lines 26-42; refill file contains such information; data center can hold information corresponding to a plurality of meters; reset data is stored in each of the account files that are representative of reset activity associated with the meters; reset data is stored in files that correspond to their respective meters);

- using the respective mail piece data, storing empirical data in each of the plurality of account files representative of mailing activity associated with the plurality of postage metering systems, respectively (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 3, line 49, through column 4, line 17; column 4, lines 26-42; expenditure file contains such empirical data; data center can hold information corresponding to a plurality of meters; empirical data is stored in each of the account files that are representative of mailing activity associated with the meters; empirical data is stored in files that correspond to their respective meters);

- conducting a forensic accounting analysis of the empirical data and the reset data associated with a selected postage metering system using a previously defined time period over which to conduct the forensic accounting analysis (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 3, line 49, through column 4, line 17; column 4, lines 26-42; column 4, lines 53-68; column 5, lines 1-44; column 7, lines 1-7; forensic accounting analysis here is the comparison of postage purchased with postage used for the purpose of detecting potential mail fraud; empirical data here is in the expenditure file; reset data here is in the refill file; threshold may vary as a function of time; therefore, time period would need to be previously defined in order to determine threshold; analysis may be performed on a predetermined schedule).

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Hunter fails to disclose a data center in operative communication with a plurality of mail processing centers. Moore discloses a data center in operative communication with a plurality of mail processing centers (column 9, line 59, through column 11, line 19; column 24, line 21, through column 25, line 17; data center here would be the location of the control computer; mail processing centers here would be the postal inspection stations). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the invention of Hunter such that it includes a data center in operative communication with a plurality of mail processing centers, as disclosed by Moore. Motivation is provided by Moore in that having a data center in operative communication with a plurality of mail processing centers allows for the marking and tracking of mail pieces throughout the entire processing and delivery system (column 9, line 59, through column 11, line 19; column 24, line 21, through column 25, line 17).

Hunter fails to disclose receiving respective mail piece data corresponding to the mail pieces from the plurality of mail processing centers. Moore discloses receiving respective mail piece data corresponding to the mail pieces from the plurality of mail processing centers (column 9, line 59, through column 11, line 19; column 24, line 21, through column 25, line 17; mail piece data here are scanned indicia; mail processing centers here would be the postal inspection stations). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the invention of Hunter as modified above in this rejection such that it receives respective mail piece data corresponding to the mail pieces from the plurality of mail processing centers, as disclosed by Moore. Motivation is provided by Moore in that receiving such mail piece data allows for the marking and tracking of mail pieces throughout the entire

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processing and delivery system (column 9, line 59, through column 11, line 19; column 24, line 21, through column 25, line 17).

As per **Claim 3**, Hunter further discloses wherein the data center initiates responsive action if the forensic accounting analysis reveals that the empirical data is not consistent with the reset data for the selected postage metering system (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 4, lines 26-42; column 5, lines 1-44).

As per **Claim 4**, Hunter further discloses wherein the responsive action includes conducting an inspection of the selected postage metering system (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 4, lines 26-42; column 5, lines 1-44).

As per **Claim 9**, Hunter discloses:

- a method of operating a mail piece verification system for processing mail pieces, the mail pieces having associated therewith respective mail piece data (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; method helps verify if mail pieces have valid indicia by detecting postal meter fraud; processes a stream of mail pieces; postage amount and meter identification number are mail piece data);

- obtaining the respective mail piece data from the mail pieces (column 2, lines 3-24; mail piece data here would include meter identification number);

- maintaining a plurality of account files corresponding to the plurality of postage metering systems (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 3, line 49, through

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column 4, line 17; column 4, lines 26-42; account files include expenditure file and refill file; reference's invention can hold information corresponding to a plurality of meters);

- storing reset data in each of the plurality of account files representative of reset activity associated with the plurality of postage metering systems, respectively (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 3, line 49, through column 4, line 17; column 4, lines 26-42; refill file contains such information; reference's invention can hold information corresponding to a plurality of meters; reset data is stored in each of the account files that are representative of reset activity associated with the meters; reset data is stored in files that correspond to their respective meters);

- using the respective mail piece data, storing empirical data in each of the plurality of account files representative of mailing activity associated with the plurality of postage metering systems, respectively (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 3, line 49, through column 4, line 17; column 4, lines 26-42; mail piece data here would include meter identification number; mail piece data is used in that meter identification number identifies to what meter the mail piece's data pertains; expenditure file contains such empirical data; reference's invention can hold information corresponding to a plurality of meters; empirical data is stored in each of the account files that are representative of mailing activity associated with the meters; empirical data is stored in files that correspond to their respective meters);

- conducting a forensic accounting analysis of the empirical data and the reset data associated with a selected postage metering system using a previously defined time period over which to conduct the forensic accounting analysis (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 3, line 49, through column 4, line 17; column 4, lines 26-42; column 4, lines 53-68;

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column 5, lines 1-44; column 7, lines 1-7; forensic accounting analysis here is the comparison of postage purchased with postage used for the purpose of detecting potential mail fraud; empirical data here is in the expenditure file; reset data here is in the refill file; threshold may vary as a function of time; therefore, time period would need to be previously defined in order to determine threshold; analysis may be performed on a predetermined schedule).

Hunter fails to disclose receiving mail pieces at a plurality of mail processing centers that have been prepared by a plurality of postage metering systems. Moore discloses receiving mail pieces at a plurality of mail processing centers that have been prepared by a plurality of postage metering systems (column 9, line 59, through column 11, line 19; column 24, line 21, through column 25, line 17; mail processing centers here would be the postal inspection stations). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the invention of Hunter such that it receives mail pieces at a plurality of mail processing centers that have been prepared by a plurality of postage metering systems, as disclosed by Moore. Motivation is provided by Moore in that receiving such mail pieces at a plurality of mail processing centers allows for the marking and tracking of mail pieces throughout the entire processing and delivery system (column 9, line 59, through column 11, line 19; column 24, line 21, through column 25, line 17).

As per **Claim 10**, Hunter further discloses initiating responsive action if the forensic accounting analysis reveals that the empirical data is not consistent with the reset data for the selected postage metering system (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 4, lines 26-42; column 5, lines 1-44).

As per **Claim 11**, Hunter further discloses wherein the responsive action includes conducting an inspection of the selected postage metering system (column 1, lines 51-68; column 2, lines 3-24; column 4, lines 26-42; column 5, lines 1-44).

12. Claims 5-6 and 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hunter in view of Moore in further view of Fleming, U.S. Patent No. 5,953,710.

As per **Claim 5**, Hunter further discloses wherein the selected postage metering system includes an existing serial number (column 2, lines 3-24). Hunter further discloses wherein the mailpieces contain serial numbers (column 2, lines 3-24). Hunter and Moore fail to disclose issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number and the data center providing instructions to the plurality of processing centers to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number while allowing normal processing of items associated with the new identification number. Fleming discloses issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number and the data center providing instructions to the plurality of processing centers to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number while allowing normal processing of items associated with the new identification number (column 5, line 63, through column 6, line 5). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the invention of Hunter as modified in the rejection for claim 3 such that it issues a new identification number to replace an existing identification number and the data center provides instructions to the plurality of processing centers to withhold processing of items associated with

the existing identification number while allowing normal processing of items associated with the new identification number, as disclosed by Fleming. Motivation is provided in that it was well-known in the art at the time of applicant's invention that changing an identification number can help prevent fraud associated with the original identification number.

As per **Claim 6**, Hunter further discloses wherein the selected postage metering system includes an existing serial number (column 2, lines 3-24). Hunter further discloses wherein the mailpieces contain serial numbers (column 2, lines 3-24). Hunter and Moore fail to disclose wherein the responsive action includes issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number and the data center providing instructions to the plurality of processing centers to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number while allowing normal processing of items associated with the new identification number. Fleming discloses wherein the responsive action includes issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number and the data center providing instructions to the plurality of processing centers to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number while allowing normal processing of items associated with the new identification number (column 5, line 63, through column 6, line 5). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the invention of Hunter as modified in the rejection for claim 2 such that the responsive action includes issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number and the data center providing instructions to the plurality of processing centers to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number while allowing normal processing of items associated with the

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new identification number, as disclosed by Fleming. Motivation is provided in that it was well-known in the art at the time of applicant's invention that changing an identification number can help prevent fraud associated with the original identification number.

As per Claim 12, Hunter further discloses wherein the selected postage metering system includes an existing serial number (column 2, lines 3-24). Hunter further discloses wherein the mailpieces contain serial numbers (column 2, lines 3-24). Hunter and Moore fail to disclose issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number, allowing normal processing of items associated with the new identification number, and instructing the plurality of processing centers to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number. Fleming discloses issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number, allowing normal processing of items associated with the new identification number, and instructing the plurality of processing centers to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number (column 5, line 63, through column 6, line 5). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the invention of Hunter as modified in the rejection for claim 11 such that it issues a new identification number to replace an existing identification number, allows normal processing of items associated with the new identification number, and instructs the plurality of processing centers to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number, as disclosed by Fleming. Motivation is provided in that it was well-known in the art at the time of applicant's invention that changing an identification number can help prevent fraud associated with the original identification number.

As per **Claim 13**, Hunter further discloses wherein the selected postage metering system includes an existing serial number (column 2, lines 3-24). Hunter further discloses wherein the mailpieces contain serial numbers (column 2, lines 3-24). Hunter and Moore fail to disclose issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number, allowing normal processing of items associated with the new identification number, and instructing the plurality of processing centers to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number. Fleming discloses issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number, allowing normal processing of items associated with the new identification number, and instructing the plurality of processing centers to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number (column 5, line 63, through column 6, line 5). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the invention of Hunter as modified in the rejection for claim 10 such that it issues a new identification number to replace an existing identification number, allows normal processing of items associated with the new identification number, and instructs the plurality of processing centers to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number, as disclosed by Fleming. Motivation is provided in that it was well-known in the art at the time of applicant's invention that changing an identification number can help prevent fraud associated with the original identification number.

13. Claims 7 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hunter in view of Moore in further view of Berson et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,819,239.

As per **Claim 7**, Hunter and Moore fail to disclose wherein the responsive action includes issuing instructions to increase a sample rate for mail pieces including mail piece data corresponding to the selected postage metering system. Berson et al. discloses wherein the responsive action includes issuing instructions to increase a sample rate for mail pieces including mail piece data corresponding to the selected postage metering system (column 8, line 60, through column 9, line 5; column 9, line 29, through column 11, line 59; an audit here would involve an increased sample rate, a higher level of inspection). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the invention of Hunter as modified in the rejection for claim 3 such that the responsive action includes issuing instructions to increase a sample rate for mail pieces including mail piece data corresponding to the selected postage metering system, as disclosed by Berson et al. Motivation is provided by Berson et al. in that performing an audit in response to initial sampling data allows for review of a mailer's accounts when there is some indication of a need for such an audit (column 8, line 60, through column 9, line 5; column 9, line 29, through column 11, line 59).

As per **Claim 14**, Hunter and Moore fail to disclose increasing a sample rate for mail pieces including mail piece data corresponding to the selected postage metering system. Berson et al. discloses increasing a sample rate for mail pieces including mail piece data corresponding to the selected postage metering system (column 8, line 60, through column 9, line 5; column 9, line 29, through column 11, line 59; an audit here would involve an increased sample rate, a higher level of inspection). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the invention of Hunter as modified in the rejection for

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claim 11 such that it increases a sample rate for mail pieces including mail piece data corresponding to the selected postage metering system, as disclosed by Berson et al. Motivation is provided by Berson et al. in that performing an audit in response to initial sampling data allows for review of a mailer's accounts when there is some indication of a need for such an audit (column 8, line 60, through column 9, line 5; column 9, line 29, through column 11, line 59).

14. Claims 19-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hunter in view of Fleming.

As per **Claim 19**, Hunter further discloses wherein the selected postage metering system includes an existing serial number (column 2, lines 3-24). Hunter further discloses wherein the mailpieces contain serial numbers (column 2, lines 3-24). Hunter fails to disclose issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number, providing instructions to allow normal processing of items associated with the new identification number, and providing instructions to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number. Fleming discloses issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number, providing instructions to allow normal processing of items associated with the new identification number, and providing instructions to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number (column 5, line 63, through column 6, line 5). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the invention of Hunter such that it issues a new identification number to replace an existing identification number, provides instructions to allow normal processing of items associated with

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the new identification number, and provides instructions to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number, as disclosed by Fleming. Motivation is provided in that it was well-known in the art at the time of applicant's invention that changing an identification number can help prevent fraud associated with the original identification number.

As per **Claim 20**, Hunter further discloses wherein the selected postage metering system includes an existing serial number (column 2, lines 3-24). Hunter further discloses wherein the mailpieces contain serial numbers (column 2, lines 3-24). Hunter fails to disclose issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number, providing instructions to allow normal processing of items associated with the new identification number, and providing instructions to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number. Fleming discloses issuing a new identification number to replace an existing identification number, providing instructions to allow normal processing of items associated with the new identification number, and providing instructions to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number (column 5, line 63, through column 6, line 5). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to modify the invention of Hunter such that it issues a new identification number to replace an existing identification number, provides instructions to allow normal processing of items associated with the new identification number, and provides instructions to withhold processing of items associated with the existing identification number, as disclosed by Fleming. Motivation is provided in that it was well-known in the art at the time of applicant's invention that changing an identification number can help prevent fraud associated with the original identification number.

Conclusion

15. **Examiner's Note:** Examiner has cited particular portions of the references as applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings in the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested that the applicant, in preparing the responses, fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the examiner.

16. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nathan Erb whose telephone number is (571) 272-7606. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays through Fridays, 8:30 AM to 5 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Hayes can be reached on (571) 272-6708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

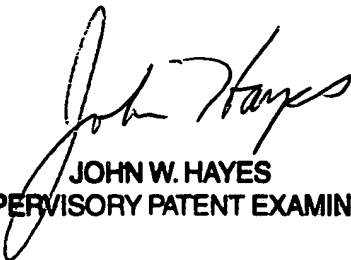
Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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JOHN W. HAYES
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER